

Dr Nathan Drake

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120. *The Gleaner: a Series of Periodical Essays; selected and arranged from scarce or neglected Volumes, with an Introduction, and Notes, by Nathan Drake, M. D. Author of "Literary Hours," and of "Essays on Periodical Literature."* Four Vols. Suttaby and Co. and R. Baldwin.

THE character of Dr. Drake, as an able Editor, being too well known to need our encomium, he shall introduce himself to our Readers:

"During the composition of the 'Essays on Periodical Literature,' it became my duty accurately to read through nearly every work in this department which had been published for a century: it will not appear extraordinary, therefore, that in turning over so many volumes, although now neglected or forgotten, I should occasionally meet with papers of value, equal, or approaching to, those which constitute the pages of what may, not improperly, be termed our 'Classical Essayists.' These, indeed, proving more numerous than I had, at first, reason to expect, it occurred to me, that, by throwing them together, under the advantages of a proper arrangement, their merits, now lost and buried in the surrounding crude mass of materials, might be rendered conspicuous, and the tribute of applause, due to their respective authors, be at length adequately apportioned.

"The Papers which, at present, form the 'British Classical Essayists,' consist of the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian; the Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler; the World, Connoisseur, and Mirror; the Lounger, the Observer, and the Looker-on. These, it may be said, display the literary harvest of this province of English composition; while the volumes now presented to the publick may, not unaptly, be considered as gleanings; which, though, when scattered widely over the ground, they attracted but little comparative attention, will now, it is hoped, when collected and put in order, form a sheaf not less rich in quality, or beautiful in appearance, than the more immediate product of the field. To the similitude, indeed, existing between the occupation of gleaning, and that of gathering together the far separated leaves of this collection,

is to be attributed the choice of the name which distinguishes its title-page †.

"Of the four volumes composing the Gleaner, the first and second are constructed of papers which were published from the year 1713 to the close of the Idler in 1760; and the third and fourth, of those which have appeared between the last period and the year 1797, when the Looker-on had received from its author a last revision and a more enlarged form." ‡

"Of the papers which have been laid under contribution for the first and second volumes of the Gleaner, the following is a list: namely, the Englishman, 1713; the Lay Monastery, 1713; the Censor, 1715; the Freethinker, 1718; the Plain Dealer, 1724; the Universal Spectator, 1728; Memoirs of the Society of Grub-street, 1730; Fog's Journal, 1732; Common Sense, 1737; the Champion, 1739; the Female Spectator, 1744; the Parrot, 1746; the Student, 1750; the Inspector, 1751; the Covent-garden Journal, 1752; the Gray's Inn Journal, 1753; the Old Maid, 1755; the Prater, 1756; and the Visitor, 1760!." §

"The periodical papers which have contributed to form the third and the succeeding volume of THE GLEANER; are, in number, twenty-two; the third volume including papers selected from The Genius, 1761; Terra Filius, 1763; The Babbler, 1767; The Bachelor, 1773; The Gentleman, 1775; The New Spectator, 1784; The Microcosm, 1786; The Pharos, 1786; The Olla Podrida, 1787; The Trifler, 1788; Variety, 1788; The Loiterer, 1789; and the fourth volume consisting of essays drawn from The Speculator, 1790; The Bee, 1790; The Grumbler, 1791; The Country Spectator, 1792; The Indian Observer, 1793; The Ranger, 1794; The Cabinet, 1794; The Sylph, 1795; The Reaper, 1796; and The Philanthrope, 1797. — From these works, many of which possess considerable merit, though not more than two or three of them have been reprinted, I trust that the selection has been such, as to render this portion of THE GLEANER peculiarly interesting and instructive."

* To which should now be added the Projector. EDIT.

† "The title of Gleaner has not hitherto been applied, I believe, to any periodical paper, on the Addisonan model, published in Great Britain. In the Eastern and Western world, however, two papers, under this appellation, have already been printed; one, if I recollect aright, at Bombay; and the other, of which I possess a copy, at Boston, in 1798, in three vols. 12mo.

‡ "For characters of these papers, and, indeed, of every other which has been written for a century back, I must refer my reader to the Essays on Periodical Literature, lately published in five volumes foolscap 8vo."

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Tycott's "Living Authors"
1816.

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Poems, 4to. 1793.—Literary Hours, or Sketches Critical and Narrative, 8vo. 1798. 2d ed. 2 v. 1800. v. 3. 1804.—Essays illustrative of the Spectator, Tatler and Guardian, 3 v. 8vo. 1805.—Essays illustrative of the Rambler, Adventurer and Idler, 2 v. 8vo. 1809.—The Gleaner, a Series of periodical Essays, selected from papers not included in the British Essayists, 4 v. 8vo. 1811.

already breathed himself off the arena, on which he may then hope, with some prospect of victory, to tread as a combatant. If he prove deficient in the poetical qualifications necessary to execute a translation reputably, a good original production is an effort of which his talents are wholly incapable."

And he observes, that the motives for the present attempt were,

"A partiality for the Author, and the recollection that the version we have now is by almost as many hands as Epistles, and that, with the exception of Sappho to Phaon, by Pope, and, I think, two others by Dryden, it is in general destitute of the spirit, and, in many instances, even of the sense of the original. Such is the fact: yet I cannot hope that the ill execution of others, however it may have incited me to the attempt, will excuse my failure; if I merit severity from the critical scourge, I shall doubtless experience it. With diffidence, but not without hope, I offer these seven Epistles to the world: if not the first essay of my pen, they are its first appeal to the ordeal of public opinion. I propose to complete the whole twenty-one in twelve months from the present time."

A few lines from the Epistle of Phædra to Hippolitus will give a fair idea of Mr. Baynes's versification:

"Oh! leave to savage woods thy cold disdain—
For, lo! I perish if I sue in vain;
Soon fails the strength, rash boy, which
never knows
Alternate respite, nor enjoys repose;
Though thine Diana's skill, the bow,
believe,
If bent for ever, will at length deceive:

Like thee, for whom Aurora sigh'd above *, [love;
In woods delighted, but he scorn'd not Like me, by beauty won, the goddess fled, [bed;
For blooming youth, her aged husband's Oft shadowing oaks saw bright-ey'd Venus yield [ceal'd †;
To glad Adonis, and their loves con- Unblest Cœnides next, a hapless name,
In forests wo'd the fair Mænalian dame; Hers was each prize which found his cer- tain bow, [this woe.
And hers the fatal spoils which caus'd Thee, loveliest youth! let these examples move;
The woods are deserts if depriv'd of love;
With thee I'll roam the rugged moun- tains o'er,
Fearless with thee pursue the savage boar!"

47. *Shakspeare and his Times; including the Biography of that Poet; Criticisms on his Genius; a New Chronology of his Plays; a Disquisition on the Object of his Sonnets; and a History of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements, Superstitions, Poetry, and Elegant Literature of his Age.* By Nathan Drake, M.D. Author of "Literary Hours," and of "Essays on Periodical Literature." Two Vols. 4to. Cadell and Davies.

THE high fame and ever-increasing popularity of our British Bard, in proportion as his works are more illustrated and more known, has occasioned many Books, and is constantly giving birth to more, whose object is, in some way or other, to gratify the publick, by dwelling upon this favourite topic. But no work has hitherto appeared, and we may venture almost to pronounce that none can in future be produced, in which so much of agreeable and well-digested information on this subject will be found, as in this masterly production of Dr. Drake. That it is the result of much study, and many hours devoted to research in every possible line from which the materials could be drawn, is evident from the most casual inspection of these Volumes, which will at once indulge and greatly extend the desire already

* "Phædra here perverts the story of Cephalus to her own purpose. Ovid, in his Metamorphoses, agrees with all others who relate the fable, that he rejected the solicitations of Aurora."

† "The loves of Venus and Adonis are generally known. To the great grief of the goddess, whilst he was hunting a wild boar, he was killed by the enraged animal."

prevalent, of being informed of every thing material which can illustrate the life, the writings, or the genius, of our imitable Dramatist.

Dr. Drake has long established a well-founded reputation for successful research into the History of our Literature, accompanied by a correct and cultivated taste in appreciating its beauties. But all that he has before achieved in illustrating our Periodical Writers (luminous and delightful as those parts of his works are) will be thrown into comparative shade by this distinguished effort of his mind. It may be considered as a magnificent temple, dedicated to the genius of Shakspeare, who presides in it as the guardian deity, like Augustus in the fane projected by Virgil,

"In medio mihi Cæsar erit."

Shakspeare is every where, and always in view, immediately or relatively; and an unity is thus bestowed upon a work of great variety, which it could not otherwise possess.

The plan of the work is extremely well digested, and cannot be better explained than in the words of the Author:

"With a view to distinctness and perspicuity of elucidation, the whole has been distributed into three parts, or pictures, entitled 'Shakspeare in Stratford,' — 'Shakspeare in London,' — 'Shakspeare in Retirement'; which, though inseparably united, as forming but portions of the same story, have yet, both in subject and execution, a peculiar character to support." *Pref.* p. 4.

The Author thus further develops the subjects of these three parts:

"The first represents our Poet in the days of his youth, on the banks of the Avon, in the midst of rural imagery, occupations, and amusements; in the second we behold him in the capital of his country, in the centre of rivalry and competition, in the actual pursuit of reputation and glory; and in the third we accompany the revered Bard to the shades of retirement, to the bosom of domestic peace, and to the enjoyment of unsullied fame." *Ibid.*

The further use made of this distribution is, to give, under the first division, an accurate view of the customs, manners, characters, diversions, and other peculiarities of the country at that period. The second part comprises, with a general view

of the contemporary literature, a similar view of the manners, customs, &c. of the Metropolis; with a complete and critical view of the Poems and Plays of Shakspeare. The third part, of necessity much less copious than either of the former, is confined to "the few circumstances which distinguish the last three years of our Bard, with a review of his disposition and moral character; and some notice of the first tributes paid to his memory?"

Here is surely abundant matter of amusement for the admirers of poetry, and in particular for those of our great and favourite Poet; yet, copious as the matter appears in this brief statement, it is greatly extended by the rich and copious manner in which, with indefatigable diligence, the Author has illustrated every possible point that has the smallest reference to his subject. It is one of those works in which the Author has exhausted all the necessary labour; leaving nothing to the reader but to enjoy, or rather to luxuriate in, the abundance provided for him.—The arguments of the chapters abundantly point out the contents.

The work has no decorations, except a print of Shakspeare's Bust, from his monument at Stratford; and a plate of Autographs of the Poet. The subject of the first chapter is rather confined. It treats only of the birth of Shakspeare, of his family, and the orthography of his name. For the latter point the author rather gives the preference to SHAKSPEARE, allowing at the same time that the Poet's own orthography varied, and that it is "nearly a matter of indifference." For the sake of uniformity, in writing on this book, we have followed the orthography of Dr. D.; but we clearly prefer SHAKESPEARE, both on account of the uniform pronunciation, and etymology of the name, and because the best authorities, in and near the Poet's time, have generally agreed in that form.

The second chapter traces, chiefly on conjectural ground, the education of the young Poet; and takes a view of the common aids to Literature in use at that period. Dr. Drake is inclined to bestow on Shakspeare some little knowledge of languages, beyond the standard marked by Dr. Farmer: not however, so much as to interfere materially

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terially with the arguments of that luminous Critick. In this estimate he is supported by an anonymous writer in the *Censura Literaria*, whose words he quotes; and perhaps there is no great reason to dispute what these Writers are inclined to grant to the Bard. But when, in the next chapter, Dr. Drake endeavours, under the same guidance, to make him an imitator of an obscure French Poet, merely from the repetition of the word *sans* in the well-known line,

" Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing;"

we must protest against the insufficiency of the proof. It may fully be shown that every Poet, contemporary with Shakspere, endeavoured to fix *sans* as an English word, and used it so without scruple: and therefore the mere repetition of the word, without any parallel to the most remarkable part of the sentence, the "sans every thing," can never fix imitation upon a Poet so little likely to borrow petty helps from obscure sources. Supposing *sans* actually established as English, it was just as obvious for an English Poet to repeat it, as for a French Writer to do it in his own language; and no degree of imitation can be inferred from it. We regret that Dr. D. suffered his better judgment, in this instance, to be misled.

At the Fifth Chapter, Dr. Drake begins his view of rural life in the time of Shakspere; a view as amusing as it is curious. He begins with Country Squires, and their houses, of which the following very curious description is copied from "*Harrison's Account of England*," published in Holinshead:

" The old timber mansions," the Historian says, " were now covered with the finest plaster; which, besides the delectable whitenesse of the stufte itselfe, is laied on so even and so smoothlie, as nothing, in my judgment, can be done with more exactnesse."

He continues,

" Of old time, our countie-houses, instead of glasse, did use much lattise, and that made either of wicker, or fine rifts of oke, in checkerwise. I read that some of the better sort, in and before the time of the Saxons, did make panels of horne instead of glasse, and fix them in wooden calmes. But as horne is now quite laied downe in everie place, so our lattises are also growne into lesse use,

because glasse is come to be so plentifull, and within a verie little so good cheape, if not better than the other. The wals of our houses on the inner sides in like sort be either hanged with tapesterie, arras worke, or painted cloths, wherein either diverse histories, or hearbes, beasts, knots, and such like, are stained; or else they are sealed with oke of our owne, or wainscot brought hither out of the East countries, whereby the roomes are not a little commended, made warme, and much more close than otherwise they would be. As for stoves, we have not hitherto used them greatest, yet doo they now begin to be made in diverse houses of the gentrie."

P. 73.

The particulars of the hospitality and festivity of those times are then detailed, and illustrated by a judicious selection from contemporary authorities. The whole, indeed, is little more than a tissue, or what the Italians call a *pasticcio*, of quotations; but the art with which they are introduced and connected is very striking.

The following description of a Country Pedant will shew how the Author brings his matter to bear upon the writings of his principal object, Shakspere.

" From the description of the character of a Country Clerical Tutor, it is an easy transition to that of the *Rural Pedagogue, or School-master*, a personage of not less consequence in the days of Elizabeth than at the present period. He frequently combined, indeed, in the sixteenth century, the reputation of a conjuror with that of a schoolmaster; and accordingly, in the *Comedy of Errors*, Pinch, in the Dramatis personae, is described as a school-master and a conjuror: and the following, not very amiable, portrait of his person is given towards the conclusion of the play:

" They brought one Pinch, a hungry, lean-faced villain,
A mere anatomy, a mountebank,
A thread-bare juggler, and a fortuneteller,
A needy, hollow-eyed, sharp-looking
A living dead man; this pernicious slave,
Foorsooth, took on him as a conjuror."

" Ben Jonson also alludes to this union of occupations, when he says, 'I would have ne'er a cunning schoolmaster in England, I mean a cunning man as a schoolmaster; that is, a conjuror.'

" A less formidable figure of a schoolmaster has been given us by Shakspere, under the character of *Holofernes*, in *Love's Labour Lost*, where he has drawn a full-

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a full-length caricature of the too frequent pedantry of this profession. Yet *Holofernes*, though he speak *a leash of languages at once*, is not deficient either in ability or discrimination; he ridicules, with much good sense and humour, the literary fops of his day, the *rackers of orthography*; and his conversation is described by his friend, *Sir Nathanael*, the curate, as possessing all the requisites to perfection. ‘Sir, your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious, pleasant without scurrility, witty without affectation (i.e. *affectation*), audacious without impudence, learned without opinion (i.e. *prejudice*), and strange without heresy.’ It is very difficult, remarks Dr. Johnson, to add any thing to this character of the schoolmaster’s table-talk; and perhaps all the precepts of Castiglione will scarcely be found to comprehend a rule for conversation so justly delineated, so widely dilated, and so nicely limited.” P. 95.

In this way does the author of “*Shakspeare and his Times*” proceed. The first volume contains a history of the Poet, his life, and times, with a chronological disquisition on the object of his sonnets, and a history of the manners, customs, &c. &c. of his age. By Nathan Drake, M.D. Author of “*Literary Hours*,” and of “*Essays on Periodical Literature*.” Two Vols. 4to. Cadell and Davies.

THE publication of this work will form an epocha in the Shakspearian History of this Country. So abundant is the light thrown by it upon the singularly interesting period in which the Poet lived, that not only every admirer of his writings, but every person who is curious on the subjects of our literature, manners, customs, and their history, must occasionally resort to it for information. Respecting the Poet himself, the least is acquired; but for this reason only, because little was attainable. All that could be done by examining and comparing the materials already known, by research in the writings of Shakspeare and his Contemporaries, Dr. Drake has, with unweary assiduity, and much sagacity, effected. But of little, much cannot fairly be made; and where no notices remain, the Biographer cannot be blamed for scantiness of information. But for the works of the Poet, that most immortal part

of him, our Author has done more than all his Commentators together. He has pointed out the beauties of his earliest poems, with a critical judgment, against which no fair appeal can be made. He has ascertained the object of his Sonnets (hitherto a mystery), and repelled unmerited censure, in the most manly and effectual way, by pointing out their real beauties. He has laboured the chronological view of his Dramas with more attention and exactness than any preceding Author, and has pronounced the most reasonable judgment upon the claims of the Plays which have been doubtfully ascribed to Shakspeare. He has extended his views to the Authors who were contemporary as general Poets, or who might be esteemed to have prepared the way for him in the Drama. In a word, he has left nothing undone which a judicious admirer of our great Bard could have wished him to undertake; and has performed much which no one would have thought it reasonable to require.

Such being our settled opinion, on the most mature consideration of Dr. Drake’s present work, it will not be thought extraordinary that we should be desirous still further to extend our observations upon it. Works of such elaborate and successful research, united with so much sound and original criticism, are of very rare occurrence; and therefore, if, which we do not expect, we should by any persons be thought to exceed our proper bounds, it is a fault which we are not likely very often to repeat.

The Second Volume introduces us to matters of still higher interest than the first; for here we come to the consideration of Shakspeare’s own Poems; on which no man has ever thrown half so much light as Dr. Drake. His estimate of them is not the result of an enthusiastic partiality, but of sound judgment and good taste; by the aid of which he has boldly and successfully combated the errors of some of our most favoured Critics. He begins with a view of the Poet’s first, most steady, and best patron, the Earl of Southampton, to whom, with the most ardent gratitude, he dedicated his earliest poem, the *Venus and Adonis*. After remarks, in excellent taste, on that and the *Tarquin and Lucrece*, Dr. Drake proceeds

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proceeds to the Sonnets, which he not only illustrates by a new hypothesis respecting their design, but vindicates, most ably and clearly, from the unjust depreciation which they had suffered from the caprice of Mr. Steevens. It is made perfectly clear, that the beloved person, whom, with a kind of equivocal adoration, the Poet addresses and celebrates in the majority of the Sonnets, was undoubtedly the Earl of Southampton. The language of love adopted in them is clearly shewn to be no other than the fashionable language of friendship at that period; a language adopted by Shakspeare even in his prose addresses to the same Nobleman. It will hardly be credited, by those who now examine the Sonnets of Shakspeare with an unbiassed mind, or peruse the just remarks of Dr. Drake upon them, that a man so acute and ingenious as Mr. Steevens could be so completely blind to their merit, as he has proved himself by his expressions on the subject. He has asserted, "That these Sonnets are composed in the highest strain of affectation, pedantry, circumlocution, and nonsense;" a picture which Mr. Malone only ventures to soften, by saying, that it appears to him "overcharged," and by other apologies equally invalid. Dr. Drake, on the contrary, meets the question properly, by charging all of affectation and pedantry that is really in them, to the universal fashion of the age; by confessing the charge of "circumlocution," but accounting for it; and by positively denying, as well he may, the accusation of "nonsense." He then shews, by a great abundance of examples, the melody, perspicuity, spirit, and original beauty of a majority of these Sonnets; nor is it possible for any Reader of taste to peruse these specimens, without full conviction, both of the strange prejudice of Mr. Steevens, and of the exalted merit of the Poet.

As we cannot go into the variety of our Author's illustrations, we shall content ourselves with a single specimen; but one in itself decisive. It is the 29th Sonnet:

"When in disgrace with fortune and
men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf Heaven with my boot-
less cries, [state;
And look upon myself, and curse my

Wishing me like to one more rich in
hope, [friends possess'd,

Featur'd like him, like him with
Desiring this man's art, and that man's
scope, [least;

With what I most enjoy contented
Yet in these thoughts, myself almost
despising, [state,

Haply I think on thee,—and then my
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at

Heaven's gate :
For thy sweet love remember'd, such
wealth brings,
That then I scorn to change my state
with kings."

On the whole, we are fully prepared to agree with this very judicious Critic, in the general character of Shakspeare's minor poems, with which he concludes this Fifth Chapter of his Second Part; opposite as it is to the fashionable authority of Mr. Steevens.

"That the Poems of Shakspeare, although they are chargeable with the faults peculiar to the age in which they sprung, yet exhibit so much originality, invention, and fidelity to nature, such a rich store of moral and philosophic thought, and often such a purity, simplicity, and grace of style, as not only deservedly placed them high in the favour of his contemporaries, but will permanently secure to them no inconsiderable share of the admiration and the gratitude of posterity."—Vol. II. p. 26.

We cannot proceed further in our analysis of this work without noticing the most clear and just vindication of Shakspeare against the charge of plagiarism, from a writer in all respects his inferior. The charge was made by a most blundering, though well-intentioned writer in the *Monthly Magazine*, who at once accusing, and attempting to defend, the great Poet, both on false grounds, has heaped mistake upon mistake, in a way which can hardly be conceived, without seeing the sentiments of Dr. Drake. The sum of the accusation is, that Shakspeare's printer, Jaggard, printed as his, and with his permission, two Epistles which were written by Thomas Heywood; and certainly had been printed long before in Heywood's book, entitled *Britain's Troy*. The brief, but irrefragable refutation of the charge is, that Heywood himself, when complaining of the printer, explicitly acquits Shakspeare of all concern in it. This appears in Heywood's

wood's Address to a Bookseller (N. Okes) prefixed to his "Apology for Actors," in which are these remarkable words:

"Here likewise I must necessarily insert a manifest injury done me in that worke, by taking the two Epistles of *Paris to Helen*, and *Helen to Paris*, and printing them in a lesse volume, under the name of another (*Shakspeare*), which may put the world in opinion *I might steale them from him; and hee, to do himselfe right, hath since published them in his owne name*: but, as I must acknowledge my lines not worth his patronage under whom he hath published them, so the author (*Shakspeare*) *I know (was)* much offended with Mr. Joggard (the printer), that (altogether unknowne to him) presumed to make so bold with his name, &c. &c. THOMAS HÉYWOOD."

All this very curious matter, both of accusation and defence, will be found in detail, in Dr. D.'s Second Volume, between pp. 44 and 49.

Having ably handled the whole subject of his author's minor poems, Dr. Drake proceeds, in Chapters VI. and VII. to give such a view of the dress, manners, and customs of the inhabitants of London, in Shakspeare's time, as he had given in Part I. Chap. 5—9, of those of his rural contemporaries; that is to say, an ample and masterly one. Chapter VIII. contains a brief, but very satisfactory, view of the rise of Dramatic Poetry in England, and of the authors in that line who preceded Shakspeare. The authors so enumerated are only 20 in number, and are placed in chronological order. They are these—1. Thomas Sackville; 2. Richard Edwards; 3. John Hill; 4. Geo. Gascoigne; 5. Lewis Wager; 6. Robert Wilmot; 7. Thomas Garter; 8. Thomas Preston; 9. Geo. Wapul; 10. Tho. Lupton; 11. Geo. Whetstone; 12. Nathaniel Wood; 13. Geo. Peele; 14. John Lilly; 15. Thomas Hughes; 16. Thomas Kyd; 17. Christopher Marlowe; 18. Thomas Lodge; 19. Robert Greene; 20. Thomas Legge.

Of these Writers, though some are acknowledged to have possessed, and occasionally displayed, in their dramas, considerable poetic powers, it is clearly shown, that no one can be supposed to have offered any advantageous model or example for the genius of Shakspeare. Certain anonymous plays which appeared in the

same interval are also enumerated. Extracts from the characters given, of these poets, and their dramas, might here be inserted with great advantage to the reader and the author; but, as we are obliged to study compression rather than copiousness, we must content ourselves with only referring to them, as judicious and able pieces of criticism.

We now come, in Chapter IX. to the important period of our Bard's commencing *Dramatic Poet*, which, by arguments of great force and probability, Dr. Drake has assigned to the year 1590. The chronological list of his plays, as arranged by this critic, stands thus:—1. Pericles, 1590 (the arguments for which being justly attributed to Shakspeare, we will notice hereafter); 2. Comedy of Errors; and 3. Love's Labour Lost, 1591; 4. Henry VI. Part 1.; and 5. Part 2. the second and third of the common editions, 1592, (excluding entirely that which has been called usually Part 1.); 6. Midsummer Night's Dream, and 7. Romeo and Juliet, 1593; 8. Taming of the Shrew, 1594; 9. Two Gentlemen of Verona, and 10. King Richard III. 1595; 11. Richard II.; 12. Henry IV. Part 1. and 13. Henry IV. Part 2. 1596; 14. The Merchant of Venice, and 15. Hamlet, 1597; 16. King John, and 17. All's Well that Ends Well, 1598; 18. Henry V.; and 19. Much Ado About Nothing, 1599; 20. As You Like It, 1600; 21. Merry Wives of Windsor; and 22. Troilus and Cressida, 1601; 23. Henry VIII.; and 24. Timon of Athens, 1602; 25. Measure for Measure, 1603; 26. King Lear, 1604; 27. Cymbeline, 1605; 28. Macbeth, 1606; 29. Julius Caesar, 1607; 30. Antony and Cleopatra, 1608; 31. Coriolanus, 1609; 32. The Winter's Tale, 1610; 33. The Tempest, 1611; 34. Othello, 1612; 35. Twelfth Night, 1613.

It will be observed, that in this list, *Titus Andronicus*, and all the additional pieces which are contained in the fourth folio, and reprinted in Mr. Malone's Supplement, viz. Sir John Oldcastle, &c. are omitted; for which the author assigns his reasons at large in the proper place.

Interesting as this work is, in every part, to the lovers of English Poetry, and pre-eminently so to that numerous body, the admirers of Shakspeare, we have now reached a portion of it which

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which more powerfully arrests our attention than any other; that is, the chronology, and critical view of our great Poet's Dramas. These objects occupy the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Chapters of the Second Part; and are illustrated with more felicity of research, conducted by a more cool and steady judgment, than have hitherto been brought to the inquiry.

That in an arrangement where we have so little aid from fact or secure document, a great part must rest upon conjecture, will readily be allowed. The task of Dr. Drake has been principally to compare and weigh the conjectures of former writers, and, by the aid of a new and critical view of the Dramas themselves, either to confirm their opinions, or to propose his own.

Here we may observe, that one play, *Pericles*, is established as the work of Shakspere, which had before been regarded as doubtful: but that two which have had a place in all modern editions, namely, the *First Part of Henry VI.* and *Titus Andronicus*, are completely excluded. Nor is the smallest countenance given to the claims of *Locrine*, *Sir John Oldcastle*, *Lord Cromwell*, *The London Prodigal*, *The Puritan*, *The Yorkshire Tragedy*, which indeed have never been supported by any competent author. As they had been sometimes attributed, Mr. Malone thought fit to re-print them, with *Pericles*, in a supplemental volume, but without much contending for their authenticity. The genuine productions of our Poet for the Theatre are therefore stated as 35, of which the list and succession have just been given.

Pericles, the first of these, is considered as the earliest effort of the young Dramatist, in 1590: and as being principally, if not entirely, his own. This play was printed in 4to, as early as 1609, by Henry Gossou, who explicitly gave it as the work of Shakspere. It is not among the twenty quartos reprinted by Mr. Steevens, in four volumes, probably because, at the time of that publication, the Editor had not considered it. The testimony of Dryden is with propriety adduced as of great authority, both for its being Shakspere's, and for its being his earliest play:

"Shakspere's own Muse his *Pericles* first bore,

The Prince of Tyre was elder than the Moor." — *Prol. to Circe*, 1677.

GENT. MAG. October, 1818.

After enforcing the external, Dr. Drake dwells upon the internal evidence for this play, which he displays with great strength, by the citation of many beautiful passages. For its dumb shews, and other irregularities, a ready apology is found, in the practice of our Poet's predecessors; by which it is not wonderful that he should have been seduced in his very first attempt. From a suggestion of Mr. Steevens, it is shown to be probable that Shakspere meant his *Prince of Tyre*, to be called *Pyrocles*, a name borrowed from Sidney's *Arcadia*, published in 1590, and much admired by Shakspere. How it became corrupted or confused into *Pericles* is uncertain.—The conclusion of the whole inquiry, to which more space is allotted than to any other, is this:

"That by far the greater part of this play issued from the pen of Shakspere, that it was his first dramatic production, that it appeared towards the close of the year 1590, and that it deserves to be removed from the Appendix to the editions of Shakspere, where it has hitherto appeared, and incorporated into the body of his works." P. 226.

The Comedy of Errors, which stands in this list as the second play, is ably defended by Dr. Drake from many imputed faults. Of *Love's Labour Lost*, the next in order, it is allowed that "no play in the Author's works exhibits more decisive marks of juvenility:" yet it is asserted, that it displays several poetical gems, contains many just moral apothegms, and is distinguished by "an intrinsic, and almost inexplicable power of pleasure, which serves, perhaps, better than any other criterion, to ascertain the genuine property of Shakspere," which, if applied to *Titus Andronicus*, and what has been called *The First Part of Henry VI.* at once evinces the vanity of their pretensions." The spuriousness of the latter of these has indeed been fully proved by Mr. Malone, and is here confirmed by further proofs. Rejecting this, therefore, the two plays hitherto called the Second and Third Parts of *Henry VI.* will stand as the First and Second; and are considered by Dr. D. as the next productions of the Poet; originally, perhaps, sketched by Marlow, Peele, and others, but totally recast and reformed by the masterly hand of Shakspere:

"If,

"If, however," says Dr. D. "it should be thought convenient to have the *Old Play of Henry the Sixth* (i.e. the First Part) at hand for reference, let it be placed in an Appendix to the Poet's works; dislodging for that purpose the disgusting Tragedy of *Titus Andronicus*, which has hitherto, to the disgrace of our National Literature, and of our noblest Poet, accompanied every edition aspiring to be complete, from the folio of 1623, to the re-impression of 1813!"

As we cannot thus go through the whole list of these plays, we shall content ourselves with producing a few specimens of the author's animated and eloquent opinions on the plays of Shakspeare. In his account of the 5th of them, the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, he launches out into a copious, but very amusing view of the various fictions of Fairy History, antecedent to Shakspeare, particularly among the Goths and the Scotch; and concludes by shewing with what beauty of imagination Shakspeare has made a new Fairy system for himself, which from that time has superseded every other.

"The canvas, it is true," says our author, "which Shakspeare stretched, has since been expanded, and new groupes have been introduced; but the outline, and the mode of colouring which he employed, have been invariably followed. It is, in short, to his picture of the Fairy World that we are indebted for the *Nymphidia* of Drayton, the *Robin Goodfellow* of Jonson, the miniatures of Fletcher and Browne, the full-length portraits of Herrick, the sly allusions of Corbet, and the spirited and picturesque sketches of Milton." P. 354.

Dr. Drake quotes several fine eulogies upon our great Bard from a German Author, Augustus William Schlegel, whose Lectures on Dramatic Art were translated in 1815, by Mr. Black; and the English reader has great obligations to him for bringing to his notice an author of so much merit. Yet his own pen is equally able in characterizing, whenever he undertakes it, the peculiar excellencies of particular Dramas. On *Romeo and Juliet* he thus expresses his feelings:

"Such is the force of the appeal which the Poet makes to the heart, in this bewitching Drama, that, were it not relieved by the occasional intervention of lighter emotions, the effect would be truly painful; but with his

wonted fertility of resource, our author has effected this purpose in a manner, which, while it heightens by the power of contrast, at the same time diversifies the picture, and exhilarates the mind. Every hue of many-coloured life, the effervescence of hope, and the hushed repose of disappointment, the bloom of youth, the withered aspect of age, the intoxication of rapture, and the bitterness of grief, the scintillations of wit, and the speechless agonies of despair, tears and smiles, groans and laughter, are so blended in the texture of this piece, as to produce the necessary relief, without disturbing the union and harmony of the whole, or impairing, in the smallest degree, the gradually augmenting interest which accompanies the hapless lovers to their tomb." P. 362.

In speaking of the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Dr. D. justly condemns the blind and tasteless decisions of Hanmer, Theobald, and Upton, who not only disputed the authenticity of this Drama, but condemned it as a very inferior production. So far are these opinions, however, from having any just foundation, that we may safely assert the peculiar style of Shakspeare to be vividly impressed on all the parts of this Drama, whether serious or comic. Dr. Johnson also supports him in the opinion that no one of his plays more abounds with aphoristic sentences; and "few have more lines and passages which, singly considered, are eminently beautiful." P. 368.

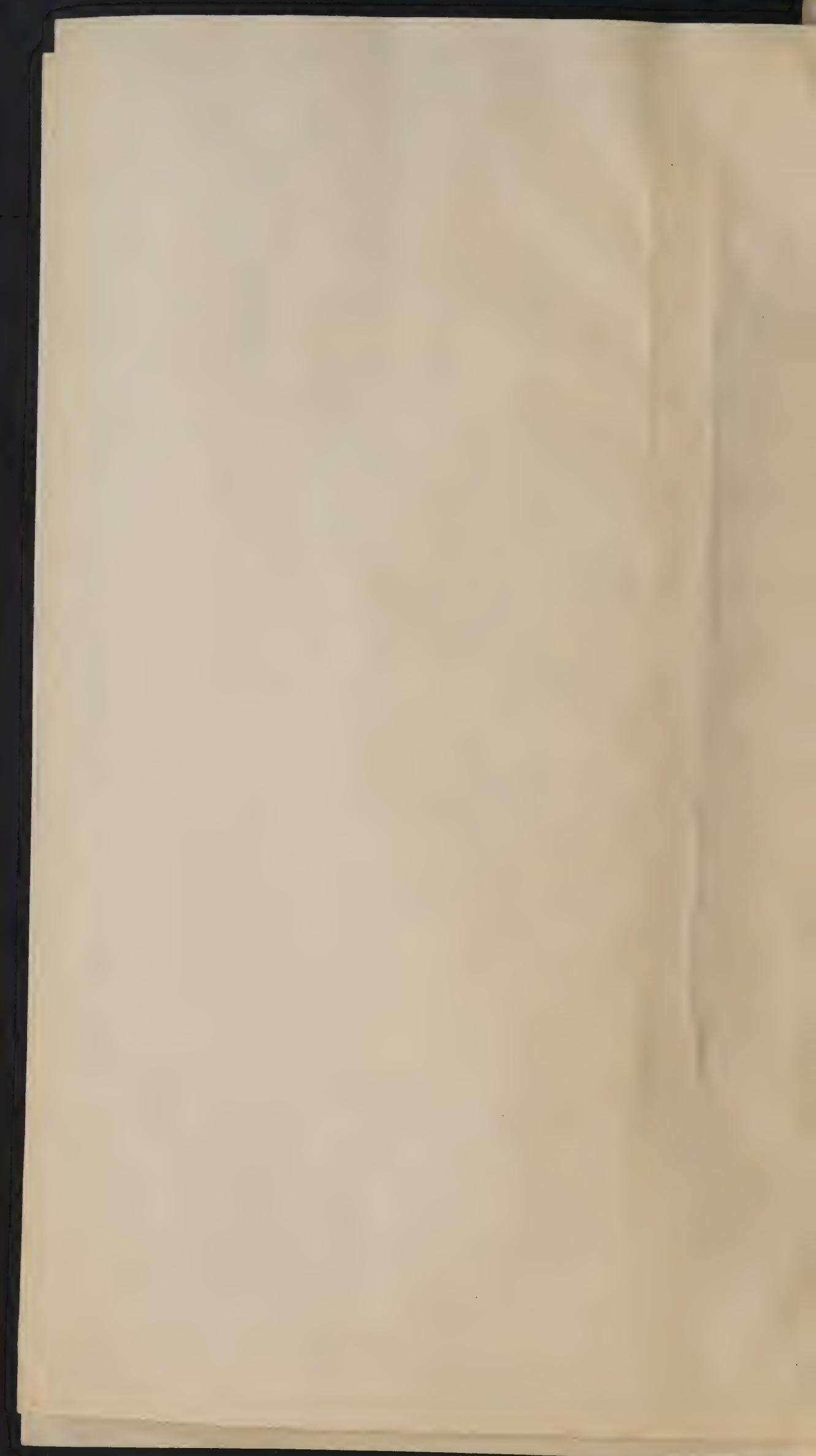
Without further extending our view of this truly attractive work, we may surely feel confident, that no intelligent reader can have perused what we have written upon it, without being convinced that we have directed his attention to a book admirably planned, and executed with vigour and ability abundantly sufficient to do justice to that plan. In fact, diligent investigation, accurate discernment, sound judgment, and elegant taste, will be found employed in every part; in full proportion to the demands for each of them respectively, from the various subjects of discussion.

The third part of the work, which is of necessity the shortest, exhibits to us Shakspeare only in his retirement at Stratford, where with heartfelt satisfaction we see him flourishing in wealth, acquired by efforts of talent and genius, which at once have made

Dr. Nathan's

made the name of the author immortal, and have added the brightest wreath of glory to his country.

As the Newspapers have lately noticed that some descendants of the Bard have been discovered in indigent circumstances, let us hope that the intimation will not be lost; but that the liberality of the country will at least give competence to the descendants of him to whom we are so deeply indebted for national glory.



EXTRACT FROM "SHAKESPEARE & HIS TIME 1617" by NATHAN DRAKE, LL.D.

vol. I. p. 21.

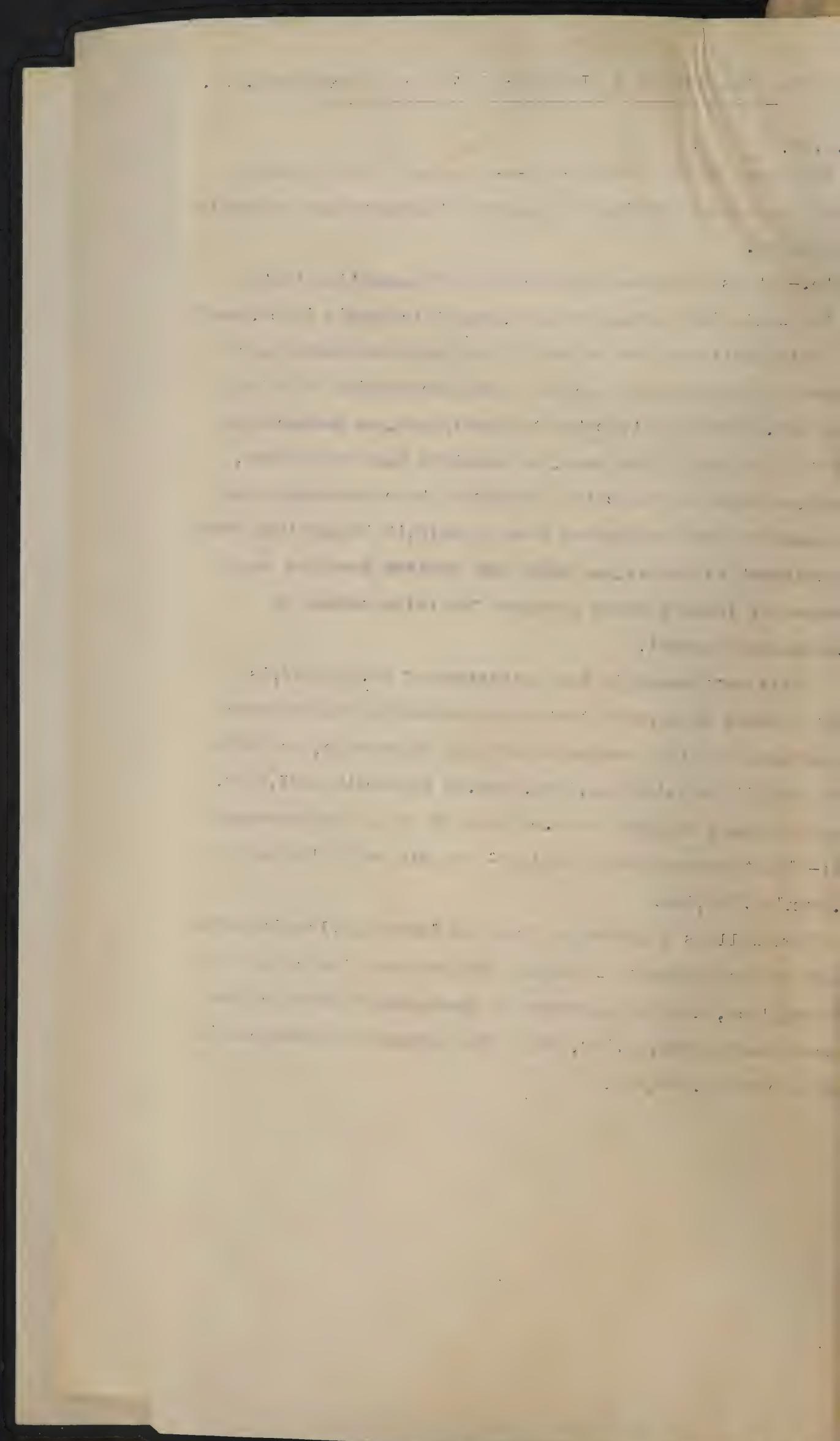
The Birth place of our Poet - - - - stands in Henley Street,
& though at present forming two separate tenements was originally
but one house.

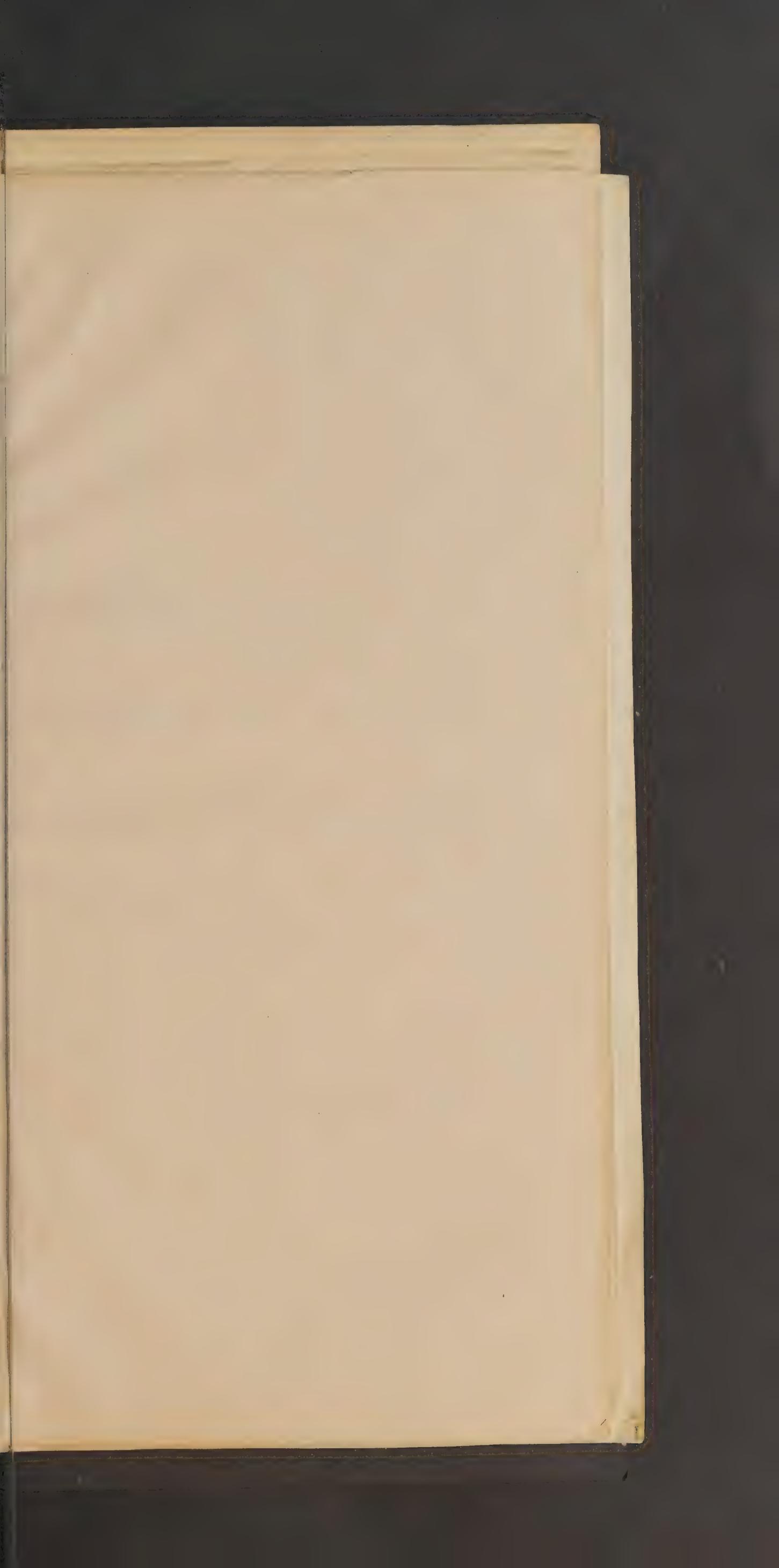
Note:- It is with some apprehension of imposition that I
quote the following passage from Mr. Samuel Ireland's "Hist. Avon".

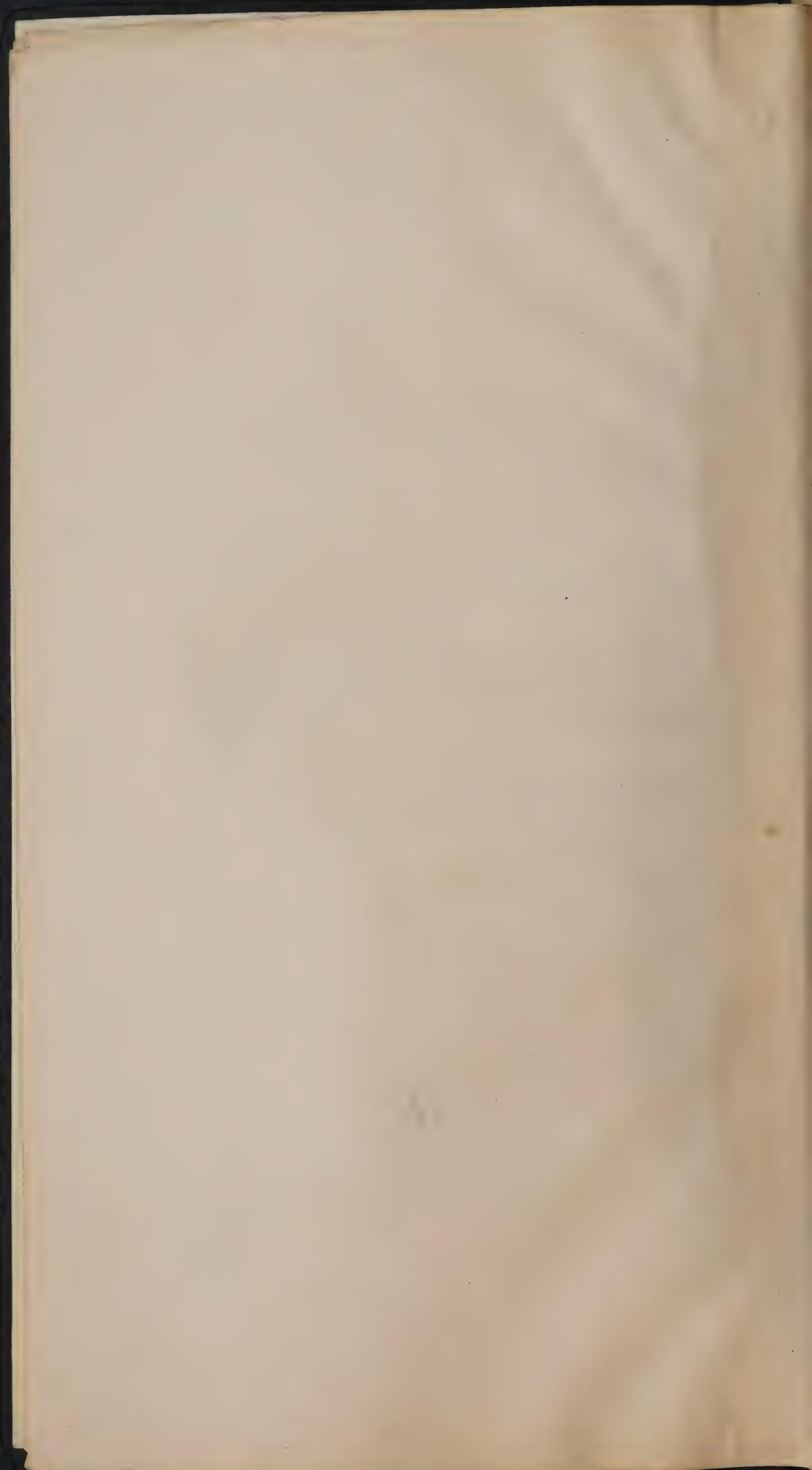
This gentleman, the father of the youth who endeavoured
so grossly to deceive the public by the fabrication of a large
mass of MSS. which he attributed to Shakespeare, was undoubtedly
at the time he wrote this book, the complete dupe of his son,
& though, as a man of veracity & integrity to be depended upon
with regard to what originated from himself, it is possible that
the settlement he quotes, may have been derived from the ample
storehouse of forgery which produced the folio volume of
"Miscellaneous Papers".

This settlement, in the possession of Mr. Ireland, is
brought forward as a proof that the premises in Henley Street
were certainly in the occupation of John Shakespeare, the father
of the poet, it is dated Aug. 14th. 33rd. of Elizabeth 1591, & Mr.
Ireland proposes to give the substance of it in the subsequent
terms:- "That George Badger senior: &c etc all as in Ireland's
"Hist. Avon" pp. 125, 126.

There follows a quotation from the "Avon" pp. 126, 127, with
respect to the encounter of David & Goliath over the chimney in
the birthplace, also the purchase of Shakespeare's Chair by the
Princess Czartoryska, pp. 129, 130, & the account of Shakespeare's
drinking bout pp. 229, 230.







William
EXTRACT FROM FORD'S PLAYS EDITED BY GIFFORD 1827

Note to introduction p. IV.

It has not been observed that this republication of Macklin's forgeries might lead in some degree to the fabrication of "Young Master Ireland". Macklin who only wanted his trick to succeed for a night or two, was satisfied with referring to Ford's Sonnets & Poems as a convincing proof that he had lived in strict friendship with Shakspeare, but his more enterprising follower, who saw a fair prospect of raising a fortune on the gullibility of this great lubber the town, prudently chose to take the Shakspearian Papers (Sonnets & Poems & Plays) into his own hands & bequeath them in the name of the great poet to an ancestor of his own - a certain W.H.Ireland Esq. who like Ford "lived in strict friendship with Shakespeare" & was entrusted with the care of his MSS.

It is mortifying to look back a few years, to this disgraceful event, & to see George Chalmers fighting knee deep in authorities for the authenticity of this most ridiculous stuff, & Dr. Parr on his knees reverently kissing a vulgar scrawl scrawling from a dirty piece of red tape with Dr. Warren close behind him. ^{of}

It is still more mortifying to reflect that had this youth, who was a poor illiterate creature, possessed but a single grain of prudence, & known when & where to stop, his worthless forgeries might at this moment be visited by anniversary crowds of devoted pilgrims in some splendid shrine set apart, in his father's house for these pious purposes.

^{of} Note :- See W.H.Ireland's Confessions

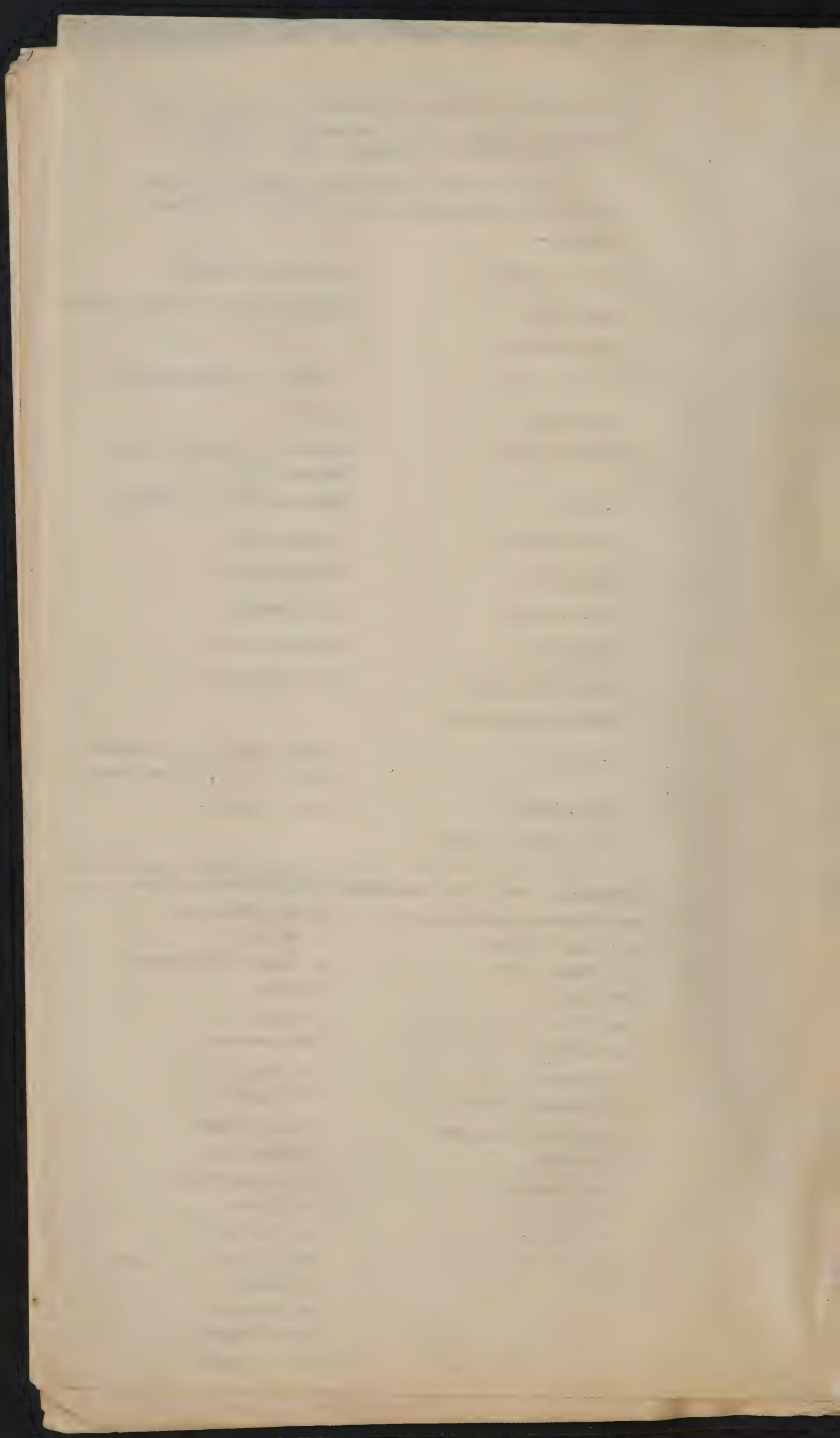
EXTRACT FROM M^{IR} IRELAND'S DOCUMENT VON OBERLÖHNER
VORBRÜCK. BEILAGE ZUM JAHRESBERICHT DER BUNDENSKAMMER
IN WIEN FÜR DAS SCHULJAHR 1794 - 1795.

In the above work it describes those who signed
the list of believers in the Shakespeare MSS. as
follows:-

John Toddell	Mercantile Critic
John Byng	Commissioner in Chancery Office
James Bindley	0 0 0 0
Herbert Croft	A would be Lexicographer
Somerset	A Duke
François Webb	Author of a Tract alias Philalethes
D. Valpy	Schoolmaster at Reading
James Boswell	A Rhapsodist
Lauderdale	A Scotch Earl
Rev. J. Scott	of Cambridge
Kinnaird	A Scotch Earl
Henry James Pye	Poet Laureate
Rev'd H. Thompson	
J. Hewlett	Translator of old Records Common Pleas Office, Temple.
" ant. Watt	A Law student.
John Friend Vernon	

Telegraph 4th April 1796 - Chief Believers True Briton 6th April 1796. The Faithful
in M^r Ireland's pretensions are Among the children of Men.

Sir Isaac Heard Duke of Clarence
M^r Craven Ord. M^r Wilmet
Dr. Parr Sir James Bland Burgess
M^r Miles M^r Pye
M^r Erskine M^r Townshend
Dr. Farmer M^r Caley
Sir Richard Heron M^r Hewlett
Chief Baron Macdonald. Duke of Leeds
Dr. Norton M^r Hardinge
Peter Andrews Sir Frederick Eden
M^r Sturt M^r Reeves
D^r Vincent M^r Chalmers
M^r Pitt M^r Bigland
Duke of Norfolk
Lord Leicester



Extract from the Proceedings of The Royal Society of Literature

On the Literary Career of a Shaksperian Forger. Read before
the Royal Society of Literature March 27th 1878.

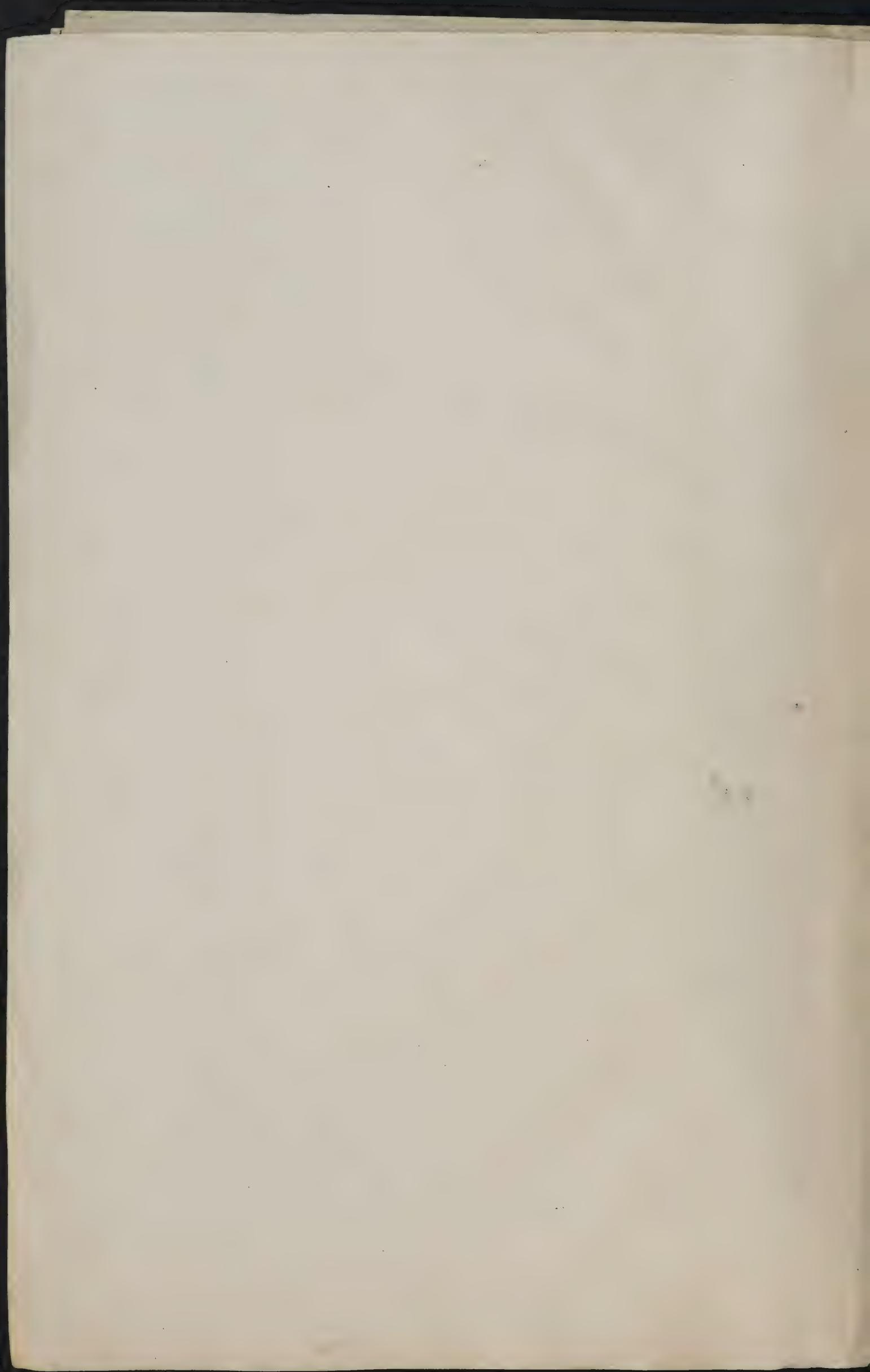
To Dr C. M. Ingleby one of our Vice Presidents we were indebted
for a paper "On the Literary Career of a "Shakspeare Forger" in
which after a brief sketch of the origin and details of the
Ireland Forgeries, he discussed the question of their authorship
which in Dec. 1855 had been reopened by Mr Burn then Editor
of Willis' Current Notes.

Mr Burn attributed all the Forgeries to the elder Ireland, but evi-
dence recently recovered confirms the original view, that W. H.
Ireland was the sole concoctor and author of the hoax.

Last summer the Trustees of the British Museum purchased of
a grandson of Samuel Ireland^{*} a Mass of Miscellaneous MSS bearing
upon these forgeries. They consist of three thick 4^{to} volumes,
1st A Scrap Book 2nd A volume of letters 3rd Samuel Ireland's Journal
besides other books deeds etc. Dr Ingleby stated that he had examined
this collection & found its contents confirmed in every important
particular, the statements of W. H. Ireland in his "Authentic Account"
and his "Confessions" thus completely establishing the innocence of
his Father.

Dr Ingleby also exhibited sixteen volumes from his own library,
being scarce Tracts and other works of W. H. Ireland, also his MSS
of "The Frogmore Féte" "Stanzas to Clara Fisher" "Monody on Shakspeare
etc, with his own copy of the "Authentic Account" Twenty eight insertions
of specimens of his Forgery, verses in the handwriting of his mother and a
fine crayon portrait of her, also volume of letters and verses addressed to Samuel
Ireland.

* The MSS. were purchased of Robson & Kerslake by the B.M. See B.M.'s letter to me.
Ingleby is in error here G.H.L.



EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES, 2nd Series vol.5. p.59.

IRELAND FORGERIES (2nd Series vol.3.p.492)

Again to resume the subject, in "The Club of London" (2 vols. Colbum 1828.) vol.2.p.107. will be found an interesting conversation the author held with Kemble upon his conduct in the celebrated "Vortigern". Although convinced that it was a forgery, Kemble insists that he acted fairly by the piece to give it a chance with the public, & denies that he did anything to make it ludicrous. He says "Mrs. Siddons positively refused to enter, ^X as she expressed herself, into so abominable a conspiracy against the memory of Shakespeare.

Varley ap Harry.
X This statement is not true. Mrs. Siddons had learnt her part but illness prevented her attending rehearsal and her illness continued for the whole of this season & Sheridan refused to pay her for that period. Mrs. Siddons' own letters (of which there are copies in another volume of this collection) bear this out. She was not in the theatre at all EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES 4th Series, vol.1.p.315. ^{on the night of 1st Jan 1800 when she was represented in the play of Richard III.}

W.H.Ireland-- I know of four pseudonyms of the above - This is probably about one third of the real number. In the Biog. Dict. of Living Authors 1818, under Clifford Chas. Esq., I find two works, one of which is Ireland's. Is the other also? ^{of}

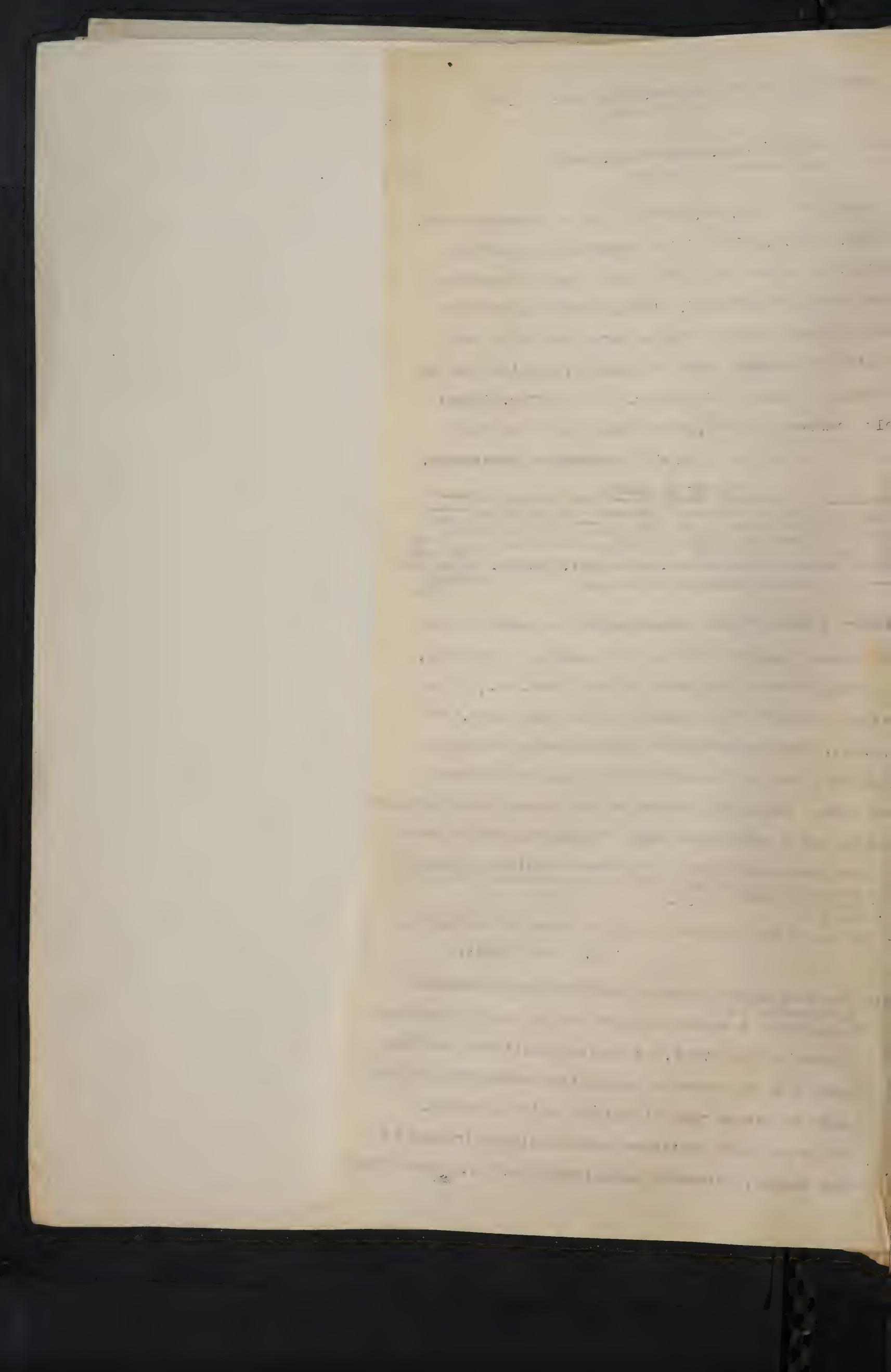
H.C. Esq. was the mark under which he wrote the "Fisher Boy", which is given to him under his own name in the above mentioned work. Can anyone inform me why he used those initials? I presume he had a particular object in adopting them - Where can the certificate of birth or baptism of Ireland be seen? Birth certificates were not in force in 1775. I have seen copies of many & various Bibles. R.T.

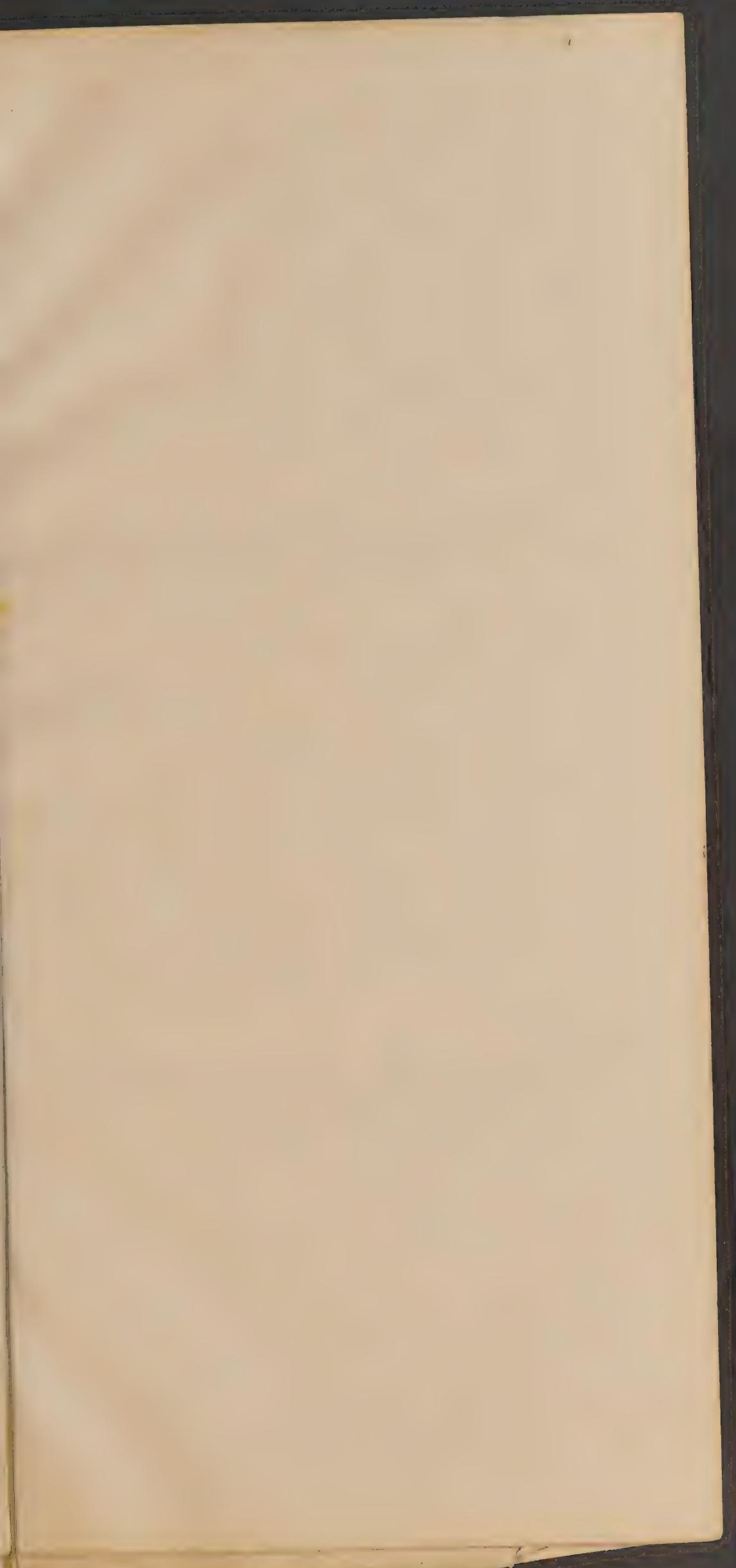
Note :- The above was written by Olphar Haunt, of New Barnet.

G. Hilder Libbis.

Note:- The work above referred to, viz:-that of doubtful authorship is "Remarks on a speech of Lord Thurlow on the Insolvent Debtor's Bill, 1788". As Ireland could not have been more than 14 years of age at this date (1788) it is safe to assume that it was not written by him.

The other work mentioned undoubtedly by Ireland is "The Angler, a didactic poem, 12mo 1804." G. Hilder Libbis







EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES, 3rd. Series, vol. IO. p. 332
1866

WILLIAM HENRY IRELAND & SHAKSPEARE MSS.

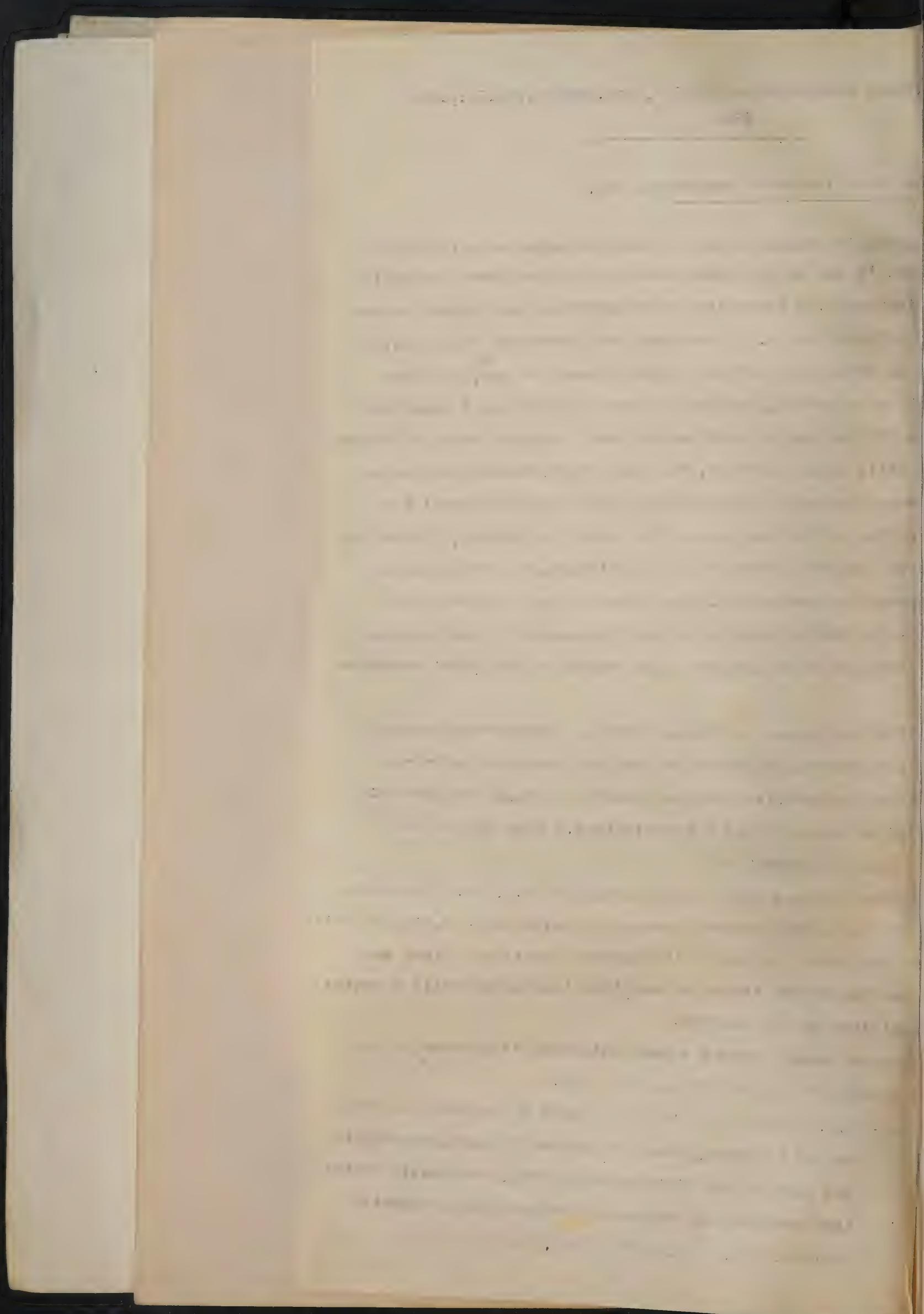
This person is stated by one of your correspondents (p. 228) to have been "a man of poor understanding with not even the skill of an imitator". I fancy that this assertion must remain a matter of opinion. When W.H.I. composed the Shakespeare forgeries, he was in an attorney's office & only 16 years of age, & to have at that early period, deceived the most learned men & sagacious critics of that day, he must surely have displayed some abilities & some skill as an imitator. The late Mr. Wm. Cobbett informs us, "That some time after the acting of the play "Vortigern" the indiscretion of the lad, caused the secret to explode, & instantly those who had been deceived by his writings, did everything in their power to destroy him. The Attorney drove him from his office - the Father drove him from his house, & in short, he was hunted down as if he had been a malefactor of the worst description."

This took place in February 1796, & after that period he was probably compelled to eke out his miserable existence by literary labours. Is there any memoir of him, or any list of his original compositions & translations? When did he die? & where was he buried?

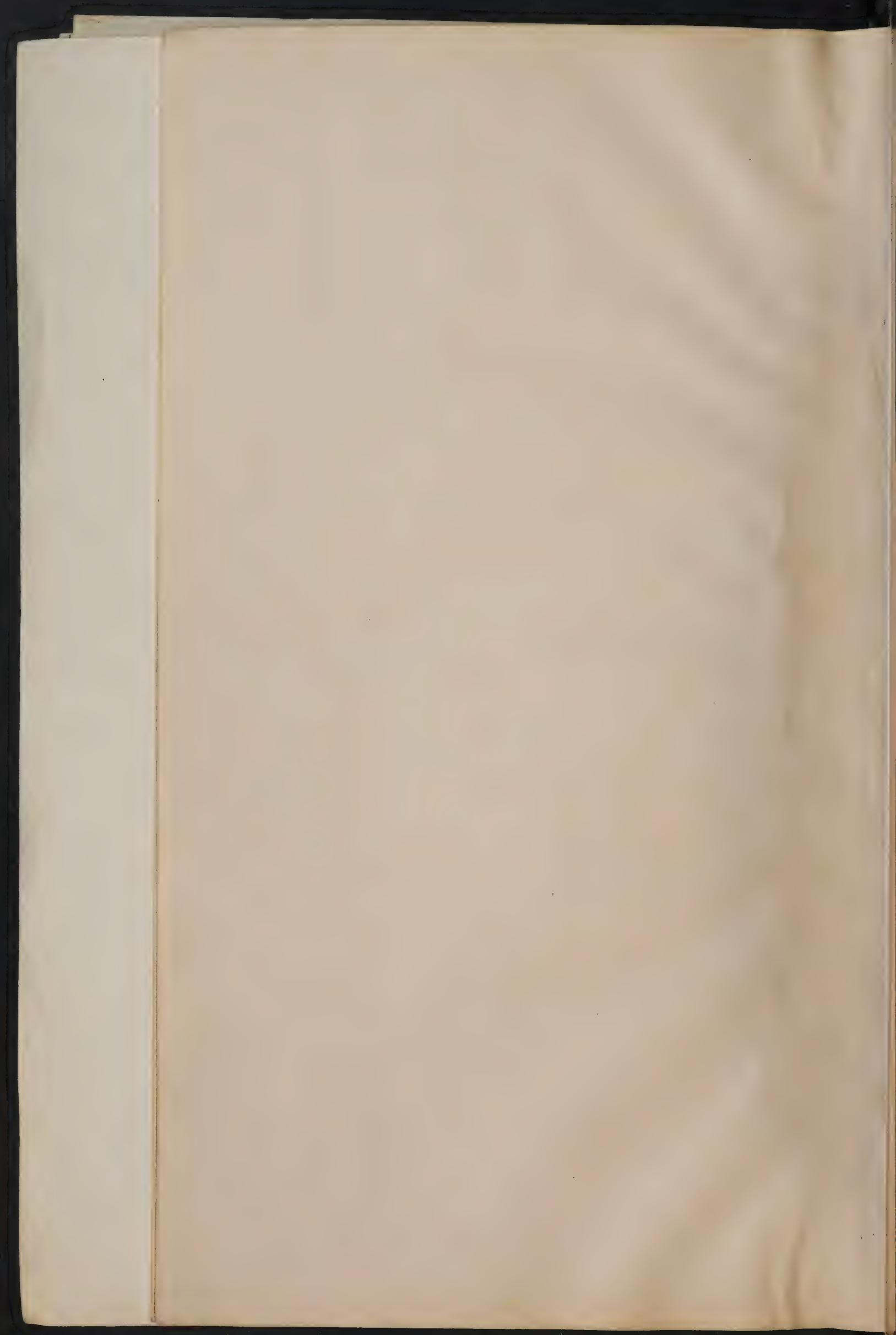
Note:- There follows here a long account of W.H.I. d. with nothing fresh to note except perhaps the following:- G. Hilderlibbie. "On glancing over the papers the shrewd & critical Ritson detected the imposition though he admitted that great skill & genius were exhibited in the forgery."

A portion of Samuel Ireland's sale catalogue is printed in the "Monthly Mirror" 1801 vol. II pp. 260 - 278.

⊗ Notes:- W.H.I. died 2nd April 1835 & the entry in the Burial Register, gives his age as 61 years, accordingly the date of his birth would be 1774. He himself states that when he had completed Vortigern he was about 19 years of age, he completed Vortigern in 1795, i.e. 1995,







Extracts from Notes of Queries

to this he would be born in 1776. He also states in his "Authentic Account" that he was articled when he was 16 years of age, so that it was three years after the date of his articles that he completed "Vortigern." He also states that the forgeries were not commenced until after his return from accompanying his father on the Avon tour, which according to the information given in S.Ireland's "Tour on the Avon" was late in the year 1793. *He was born on the 2nd August 1775* Gilder Libby.

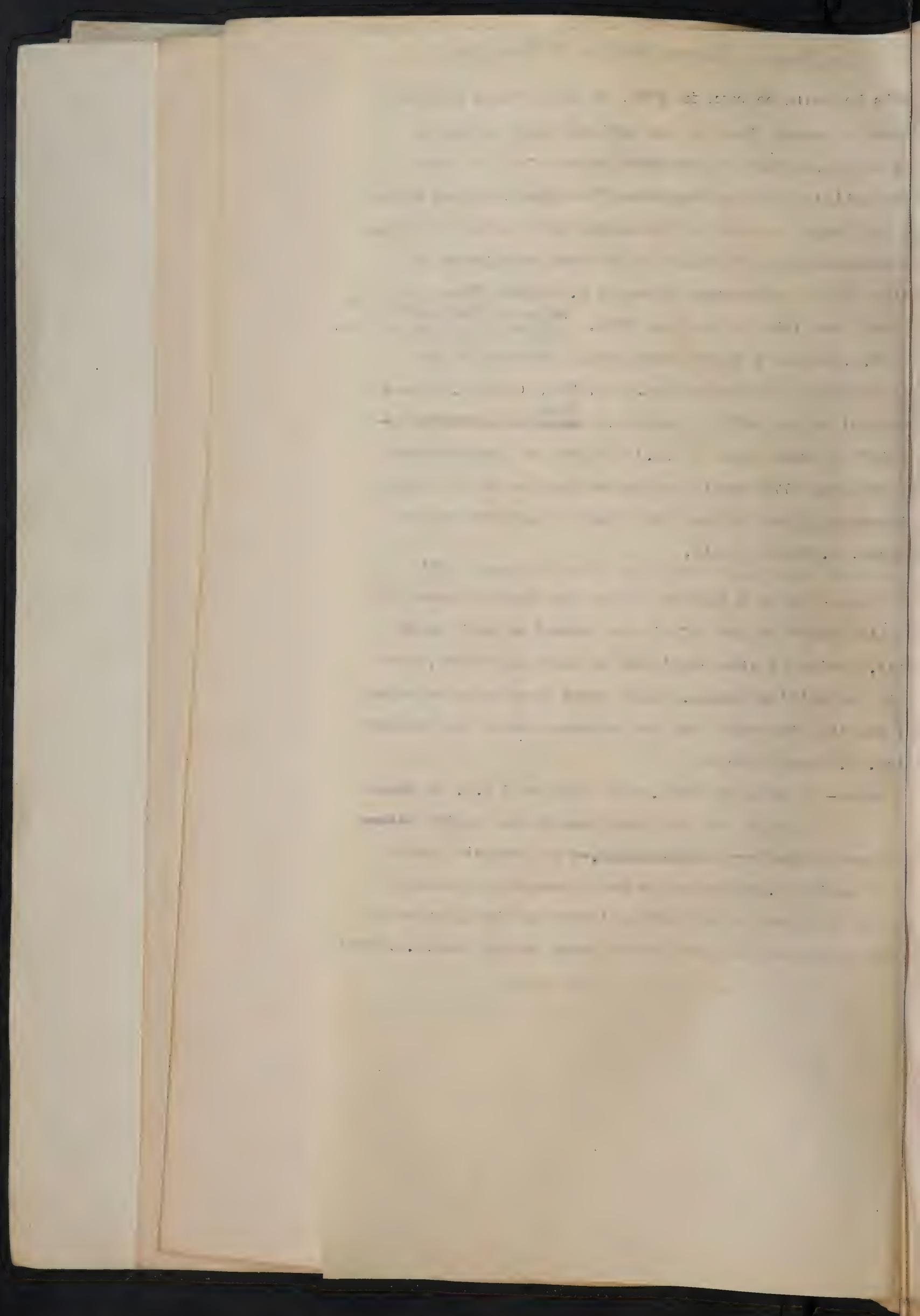
W.H.Ireland's first Shakespearian fabrication was first handed to his father Dec. 16th. 1794. (viz., S.Ireland's MS.Journal in the British Museum). I ~~have~~ ^{have} ~~been~~ ^{been} endeavoring to ascertain the exact year of W.H.I's birth as I am confident that the year 1777 usually given as the date of his birth is incorrect, & that he was older than it has hitherto been supposed. G.Hilder Libby.

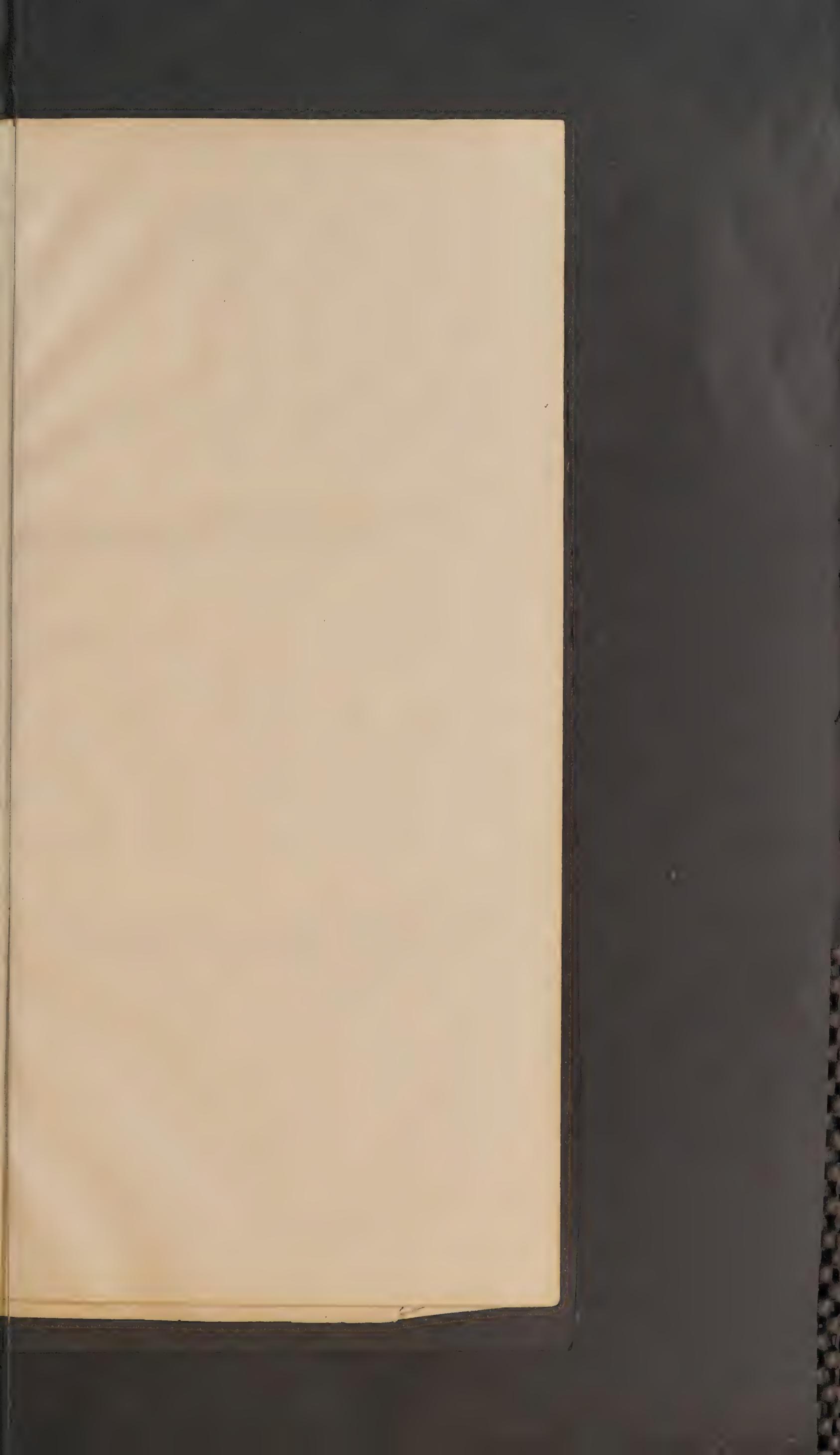
I have since ascertained that he was born 2nd August 1775

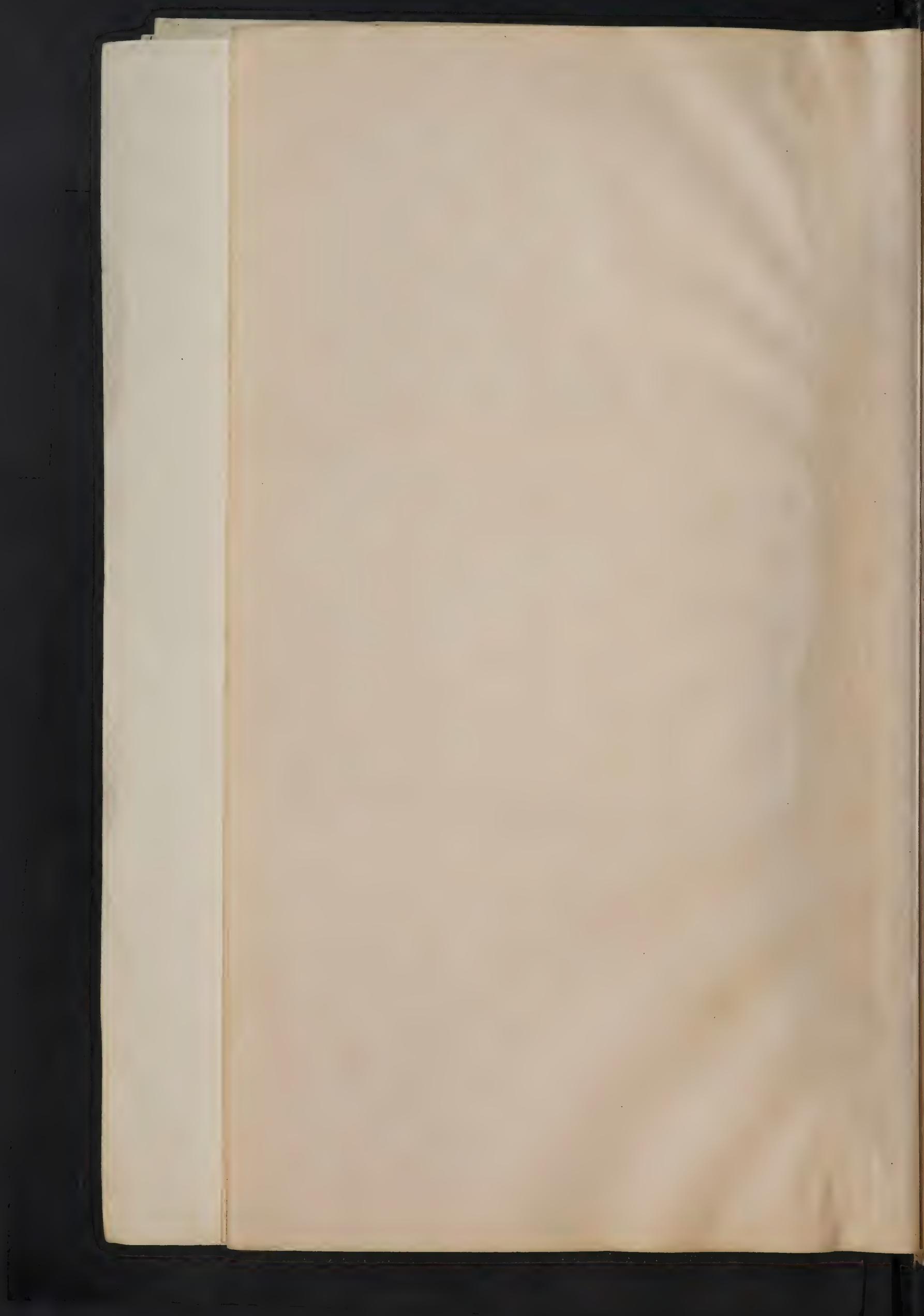
∅ Note:- It is incorrect to say "the Father drove him from his house" he left of his own accord as he himself states, & which is also confirmed by S.Ireland's MSS.Journal in the British Museum. There seems also to be no authority for the statement that the attorney drove him from his Office. G.Hilder Libby

∅ Note:- He died the 17th. April 1835 at 5 p.m. in Sussex Place in the Old Kent Road. He was buried ~~either~~ in St. George the Martyr Churchyard, or St. George's Burial Ground Southwark. The latter is now a recreation ground & is situated close to the Public Library at the junction of Tabard Street, the Old Kent Road & Tower Bridge Road. G.H.Libby

The author was not buried in either of these places, but was interred in a quiet spot in the grounds of his late residence.







Extracts from Notes & Queries

5th. Series vol. 2. p. 200.

Fielding's Proverbs - The compiler of this book was the late W.H. Ireland or Shaksperian Forger^{or} notoriety. Ireland was in distress at the time of its publication & it was an attempt to raise the wind. The proverbs were cut about the same time as Ireland's translation of Voltaire's *Rousseau's Discourse*.

The late Mr. A. Denham of Piersbridge, produced a very superior work on Proverbs. He quotes Fielding, not being aware that Ireland was the author, but supposing that the book was by the author of "Tom Jones" & "Jonathan Wild".

Is Olphar Hamst aware of the above facts?

Stephen Jackson.

EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES, 5th. Series vol. 2. p. 414.

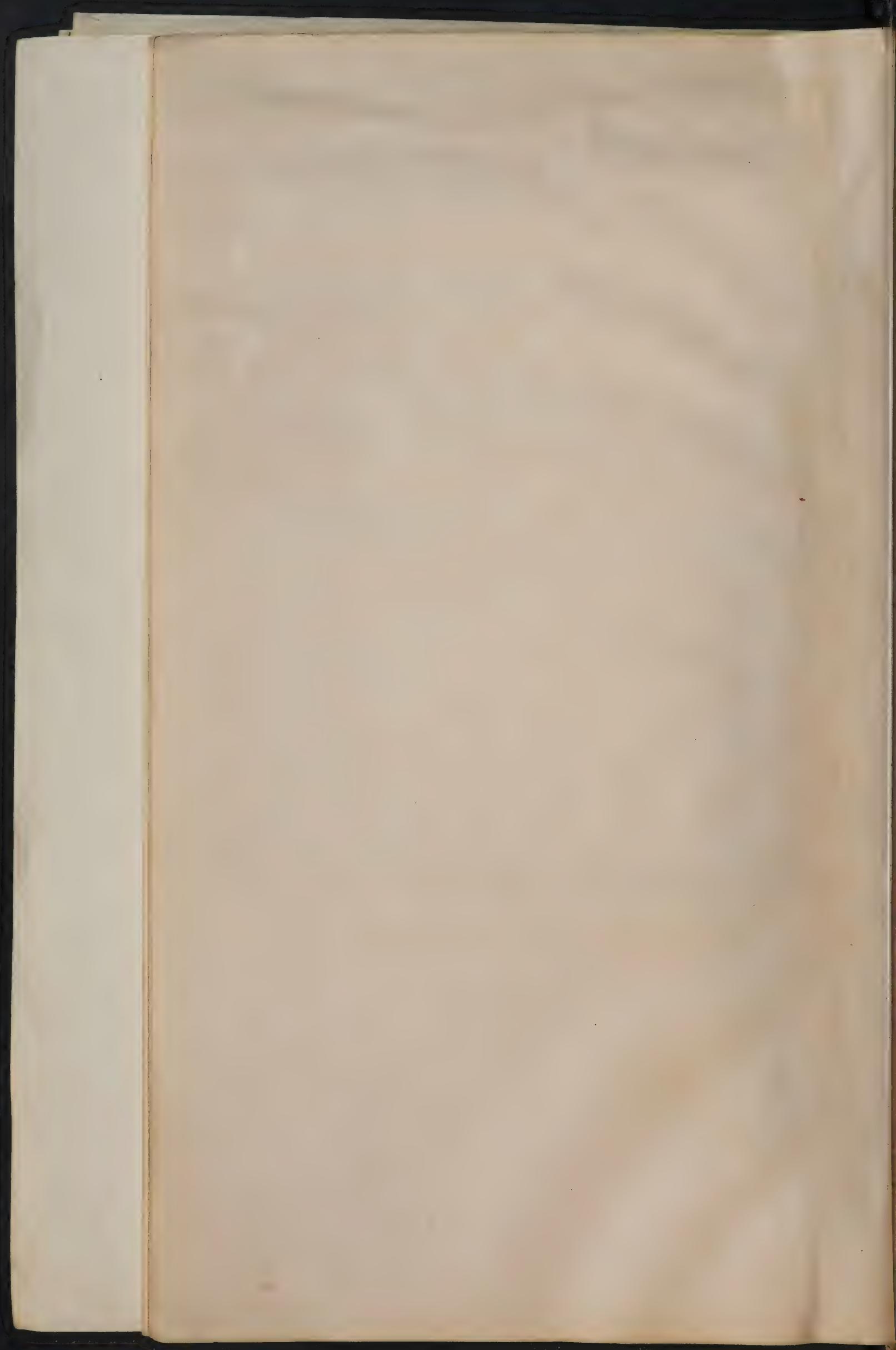
Fielding's Proverbs - I am not aware of the facts stated in Mr. Stephen Jackson's interesting note. As the work he refers to "Select Proverbs of all Nations" was published in 1824 & "Thomas" is given as the author's Christian name, Mr. Denham must have mistaken it for Henry Fielding. Will Mr. Jackson oblige with his reasons or authority for his note, & give page in Denham's Book (Percy Society 1824). I presume where reference to Fielding's Proverbs is found.

Olfhar Hamst (Pseud. for Ralph Thomas
Newmarket Herts.)

5th. Series, vol. 3. p. 170.

Fielding's Proverbs - I cannot reply with all Mr. Olphar Hamst's wants. The original publication of the above was Fairburn, Broadway, Ludgate Hill.

I took an interest in the "Universal Songster & Monorier's "Brilliant Songster" which Fairburn was publishing at the same time, & so I formed a gossiping acquaintance with W.H. Ireland. I state as a positive fact that before the date of Fielding was a non de plume according to Ireland's information, & Fairburn knew the name of Ireland was not in good odour, either with the law or the public at large.



Extracts from Notes & Queries

M.A. Denham's book was originally a Penn's Society publication. Denham was a sharpener at Piersbridge near Darlington & a Quaker - I think nothing of his confounding the sham Fielding with the real one.

Stephen Jackson
Via Panzani, Florence.

EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES, 6th. Series, vol. 3, p. 346.

J. Eliot Hodgkin of Chilham, Richmond, Surrey, asks for information relating to the Life & History of Wm. H. Ireland, other than that contained in the following works, & the name of any further controversial tracts.

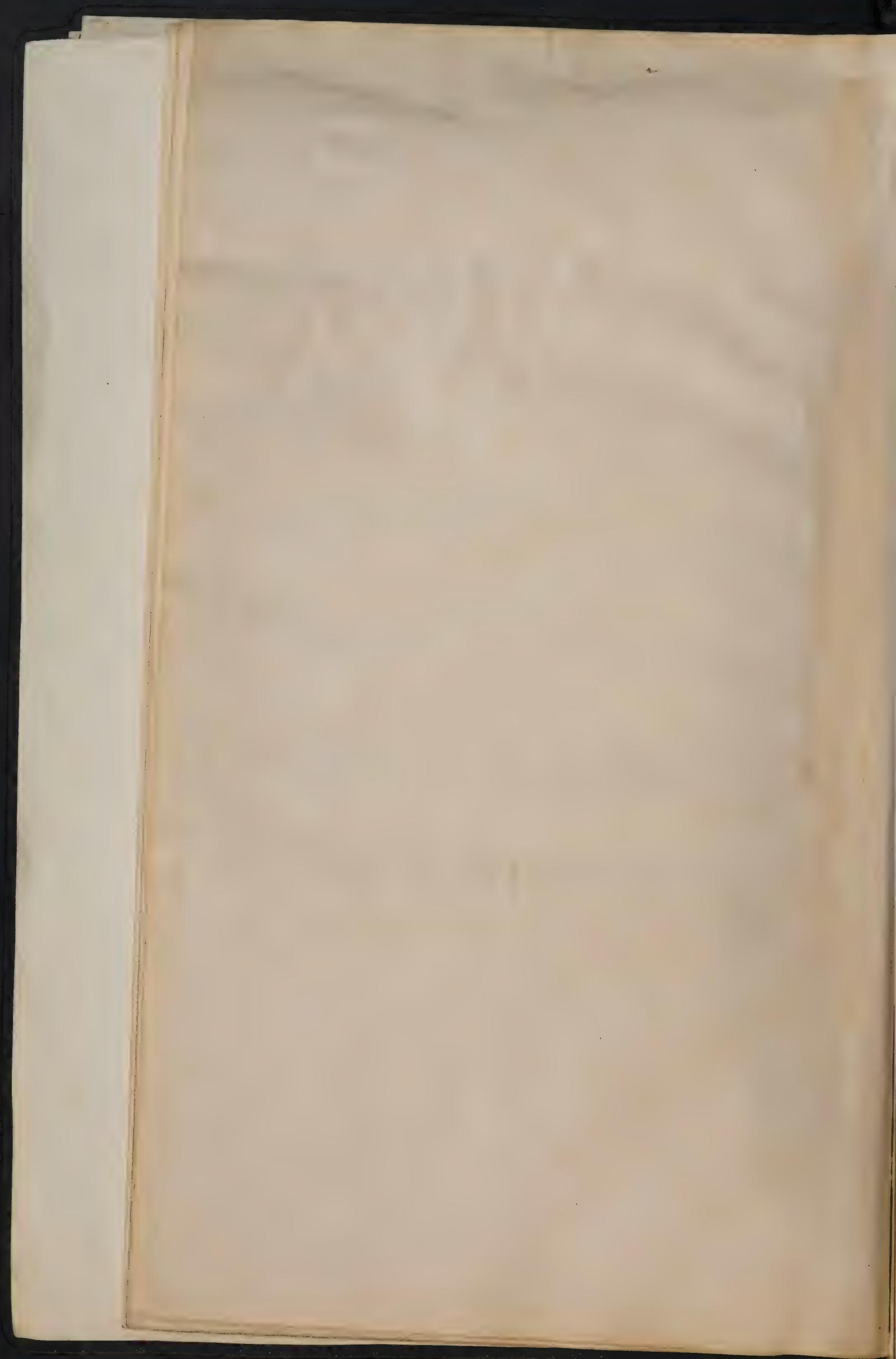
Malone's "Inquiry". "Authentic Account". "Confessions".
"Letter to Steevens". "Shakspeare MSS! by Philalethes.
Waldron's "Free Reflections". "Investigation of Malone's Claim.

6th. Series, vol. 3. p. 393.

C.M. Ingleby refers Hodgkin to "The Man & the Book." & Edward H. Marshall M.A. gives a list of further controversial tracts as follows:- "Passages Selected". "Miscellaneous Papers".

"Comparative View of Boaden". Ireland's "Investigation"
"Ireland's Vindication". Chalmer's "Apology". Chalmer's "Supplementary Apology". "Chalmeriana". "Vortigern" 1832.

Ireland died in 1834, for an account of him see Michaud's "Biographie Universelle" & Didot's "Nouvelle Biographie Universelle".



EXTRACTS FROM "NOTES & QUERIES"

2nd Series, vol. 3. p. 344.

William Bates of Birmingham writes, that his copy of the "Confessions" once belonged to Robert Lang the eminent Roxburgher, the Meliadas of Dr. Dibden - There are many notes in his autograph, one says:-

"My name appears in the list of those who have been ridiculed as subscribing to the Shakspeare papers. It was put down by my Father-in-Law who was an implicit believer - he had young Ireland frequently at his house, & the loan of Henry 2nd. in MS. previous to the performance of Vertigern - his name was of considerable weight, & he was a man of a good judgement of such subjects. When I returned from seeing the papers in Norfolk Street, I was not satisfied, but I think it was principally in consequence of remarking the singularity of the drawing of Mortimer's which hung in the room adjacent to Ireland's Library.

I mentioned this in the evening at Mr. Bennet Langton's, & was struck with the benevolence of his remark on the subject of the Papers. He said from various inquiries, he had no doubt the Papers were spurious, he had been pressed to see them, he had no doubt that his opinion would be against them, & if that was given out, it might possibly injure Ireland, who he believed was poor & he would not go. He must have considered it as an ingenuous & innocent deception."

"Bates" then proceeds to say, that Malone, Chalmers, Beaden etc. who were incapable of comprehending Shakspeare, bore revengeful & malignant feelings for their boasted sagacity being set at nought by a Boy.

This was a glorious affair for Cobbett, whose contempt for Shakspeare is well known ("Advice to young Men" p. 75.) as it illustrates the truth of his opinion, & an opportunity to laugh at the Doctors.

Extracts from Notes & Queries

The pompous pedant Parr, now fast sinking into oblivion & whose works are just better than waste paper, tries, in language unfitting the divine & the gentleman, to back out of his avowed belief in the genuineness of the Papers (Bib. Parriana p.522.). But this generation of critics has passed away, poor Ireland has expiated his dangerous & too successful experiment by a prescribed & impoverished life, & a death doubtless hastened by a consciousness of injustice & cruelty.

Bates then proceeds to write of the article in Willis's Current Notes, as to Samuel Ireland being the real forger, & that he does not believe this & asks for further information.

EXTRACT FROM NOTES & QUERIES, 3rd Series vol. IO p.228.

1866.

Copies from Vol.
Fielding's Proverbs — The author of this very poor book was the late W.H. Ireland. The book was got up hastily & when Ireland so far as finances were concerned, was in extremis.

— — — — — Ireland was a man of very poor abilities, his ballads are rubbish, his romances plagiarisms, his "Vertigern" a tissue of bombast. He had not even the skill of an imitator.

S. Jackson.

4th Series, vol. 3. p. 362

This article quotes extracts from Ireland's "Chalcographimania" relating to Wm. Huntingdon S.S. & a note at the end states that "Chalcographimania" is one of the feeble productions of W.H. Ireland. G. Hilder Libbis.

